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INTELLIGENCE.

AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY.

EXTRACT FROM REPORT OF REV. WILLIAM ELY.—To the Committee of the American Peace Society, their agent, for Tolland County, respectfully submits the following report:—

In my arrangements with Mr. Watson, I selected Tolland County for the field of my labour, supposing that I should have best success in the churches with which I was most familiar. I wished also to take advantage of my connexion with the Sabbath Schools, it having been a part of my duty, for several years, as Secretary of the County Sabbath School Union, to address the Sabbath Schools as frequently as possible.

The term of my service was limited to three months. I commenced my agency the first Sabbath in August, and spent twelve Sabbaths in the employment of the Society, extending into the month of November, having occasion a part of the time to be with my own people. With the exception of two and a half Sabbaths, I supplied my desk by exchange, and thus materially diminished the expenses of the agency. Twenty-four days I employed myself from morning till night, going from house to house in all the numerous roads of the parish, explaining the objects of the Peace Society, seeking to impart to individuals an interest in its operations, and receiving the voluntary gifts of the people to aid your funds. I was cordially received by all the friends of the sacred charities of the day, and in a few instances received a donation from those who had neve given to other objects. I was careful to state, that I wished for no gift which should diminish from offerings to other benevolent societies, or which would subject the donor to inconvenience.

In discharging the duties of the Sabbath, I made it an important point, to prepare in the church a soil in which the fruits of peace might flourish, and specially addressed the church in the morning's discourse, from Galatians v. 22: *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, etc.* In the afternoon I addressed the children and youth of the Sabbath School, from the cxxxiii. Psalm: *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.* In all my efforts, I have kept in view the ground which the American Peace Society has so wisely taken, that in diffusing the blessings of peace, we can hope for success, only as the truths of the gospel are acknowledged, and its legitimate influences are felt. The address of the Society to pastors, I read in the course of the morning or afternoon, and reserved the annual report, (in its most important extracts,) for a third service. At this time I made my fullest statements with regard to funds. The whole congregation, however, were informed, during the day, that they would be called upon during the week for a "*free-will peace-offering.*"

The books of the Society, entrusted to my care for distribution, I left with the heads of the Sabbath School, and through their instrumentality, gave out one of the smaller volumes to every family in a parish. These were gratefully received, and their character highly approved.

The churches in Tolland County are principally of the Congregational order. I attended a third service in the Baptist Congregation, in Willington, in company with Rev. Dr. Chaplin, and Rev. Sylvester Barrows, of Tolland, in both of whom the Society have warm advocates of their cause. In Hebron, also, was aided in a third service by a minister of the Methodist connexion. I was careful that my agency should in no respect assume a sectarian character; believing that one prominent object to be aimed at by the

Peace Society, is to unite Christians of different names, in mutual efforts to extend the kingdom of Christ, and to spread its benign influence. It may not, perhaps, be improper for me, in the close of my report, to make some general remarks concerning the progress of the cause of peace in the community, so far as it may be learned from a limited agency.

I found that the publications of the American Peace Society had exerted an influence beyond my expectation. The persevering efforts of the beloved WATSON had thrown some tract or report, into every neighbourhood, and his name was familiar on many tongues. Calling upon an eminent Christian in the town of Somers, after enjoying a precious interview, as I passed from the house, being unable through infirmity to follow me, he raised the window and called to me, saying, "Give my love to my friend Watson." This saint, on the verge of heaven, being more than ninety years of age," will soon enter, with the friend to whom he sent the message, upon the rewards of "peace-makers" I may add, that I found not a few among aged Christians to whom the cause of peace seemed to be doubly dear. Their spirits were becoming meet for heaven, and the song of angels was their delight, "*On earth peace, good-will toward men.*"

Females almost universally express their approbation of the Peace Society, and contribute their small, but valuable offerings, with cheerfulness. In some instances I received the *widow's* gift under circumstances deeply affecting.

I am fully convinced that the Peace Society will gain ground by a silent and gradual influence, till, finally, its objects shall be effected; but it has yet many obstacles with which to contend.

In my opinion, serious injury has been done to the society by placing defensive and offensive wars upon the same ground. The opinion among the people of all classes, is nearly universal, that wars *strictly defensive* may *sometimes* be demanded. *So far as I know, no objection is made to the course which the American Peace Society pursues.* I found it important to state, that no opposition was designed against the regularly instituted authorities of government. In repeated instances I solicited and received donations from members and officers of military companies, at the same time publishing to them the principles of peace.

A most formidable obstacle to be encountered, will be the difficulty of raising funds. It is not easy to make any considerable number among the people sensible of the importance of the efforts of the Peace Society, in such a degree as to call forth liberal gifts. I saw at once, that my dependance must be upon *many small sums*, and those obtained by personal solicitation. If I had depended upon public contributions, I should have received, in most places, a trifling sum. In this case, as in others, individuals acting in a public body seem to lose a sense of personal obligation. This remark will apply to the collections which are taken for most public charities.

The great number of objects demanding contributions, now before the public, will prove a great hindrance to the success of a peace agent. I am decidedly of the opinion, that it will be for the interest of the Society to take one section of the country for resources, one year, and another section another, so far as *general contributions* are concerned. There are individuals who will choose to subscribe every year. It would not meet the views of the congregations in this vicinity to have agents come to them for this object annually.

The committee will excuse the freedom of these remarks, as I supposed it might be of use to state the bearings of this subject in this region, that well grounded expectations may be formed of the future progress of the cause.

I ought, perhaps, to add, that the gloomy prospects of the husbandman, the last autumn, materially affected my success. As the cold commenced, and supplies for winter were needed, I met with many *well-wishers*, with empty purses.

In an interview with the committee, I might state many particulars which cannot be introduced into a written communication.

I hope, should my life be spared, to continue my efforts, in some form, in future years, for the benefit of this holy and benevolent cause; yet I see no prospect of being able to take a permanent agency.

EXTRACT FROM A COMMUNICATION OF REV. GEORGE BECKWITH, *Agent of the American Peace Society, to the Secretary of the Society, dated*

MIDDLEBURY, VT. Nov. 14, 1836.

DEAR SIR,

I ought, perhaps, to have informed you before this of the Peace Society in Middlebury College. It was organized after I visited the place last August, and has excited such a degree of interest, that about *one hundred and fifty students* out of one hundred and sixty-eight, are already members. Their constitution is now before me; but I have not time to copy it entire. The society is called "*The Peace Society of Middlebury College, auxiliary to the American Peace Society.*" Its object, as stated in the second article of its constitution, is "to illustrate the inconsistency of war with Christianity, and the true interests of mankind; to diffuse light concerning its guilt and its evils; to show the practicability, and ascertain the best means of its universal abolition; but especially to prepare its members for more effectually promoting in future life the cause of Peace." It is made "the duty of every member to labour for the advancement of the cause of Peace." The funds of the society "consist in the voluntary contributions of its members and others." A meeting is to be holden "in each term, at such time and place as the Executive Committee shall direct," and to consist of such exercises as they shall appoint. They are likewise authorized to call such other meetings as will in their judgment subserve the interests of the cause. The organization of the Society is simple, and the Executive Committee of three, the President, Vice President, and Corresponding Secretary, are entrusted with the discretionary management of all its concerns.

This cause has taken a stronger and deeper hold of the students here than I had ventured to expect. It meets with general favour, and awakens an auspicious kind and degree of interest. The Society had a public exhibition on the 2nd inst.; and from all I can learn, I judge it must have been highly creditable to the performers, and unexpectedly interesting to the large and select assembly of spectators. Dr. Bates, President of the College, presided, and opened the exercises with prayer. An unusual number of respectable, and literary gentlemen were present. I send the order of exercises.

1. Prayer.—2. Sacred Music.—3. Oration: Influence of War upon Literature, by William Bates.—4. Sacred Music.—5. Debate: Question—Are the principles adopted by the American Peace Society impracticable? *Affirmative*, J. A. Ranney, J. W. Ransom, J. Ramsdell. *Negative*, L. Taylor, A. Farwell, W. Warner.—6. Sacred Music.—7. Poem: Progress of War, by C. Abbott.—8. Ode.

The oration, by a son of Dr. Bates, sketched the influence of war in perverting the mind, diverting it from the pursuit of useful knowledge, and engrossing it with the work of human butchery—the standing theme of eulogy for poets, orators and historians both ancient and modern. He showed how the war spirit had leavened the literature of the world, and thus furnished a sort of moral poison as food for its leading minds. Such views ought to become familiar to the inmates of our higher seminaries, to the whole reading community; and, when their eyes are fully opened to the moral dangers from this source, the evil will be more than half remedied. It augurs well to see the future lawgivers of public opinion looking at this subject in such a light, and preparing to go forth ere long, and imprint an image of themselves, each, upon hundreds of thousands.

The question concerning the practicability of our object and plan, was dis.

cussed with ability and interest. The common objections, repeated so often by minds which *ought* to know better, were fully met, and arguments adduced to prove, that the pacification of the world, coextensive with the spread of Christianity, is just as feasible, and just as incumbent on the disciples of Christ, as any other enterprize of evangelical reform.

Such views, in our literary institutions, promise much for the cause of Peace; and I hope that similar exercises will ere long be held in all our higher seminaries of learning. I am happy in being able to inform you, that Societies like this in Middlebury College, are about to be organized in two other colleges which I have recently visited. I bid them God speed, and pray devoutly for the day to be hastened when every nursery of knowledge and character in Christendom—from the university down to the infant school, and the fireside, will become a nursery of peace to train up an entire generation of peace-makers. This is the surest, the cheapest, the speediest, the only effectual way of pacifying our world; and here is work enough for the parents, guardians and teachers of the rising generation. They are our main co-workers in this divine cause; and to them do we make our first and most urgent appeal.

GROTIUS' OPINION OF MERCENARIES.—"As I have pronounced all belligerent confederacies entered into, with an intention to furnish auxiliary forces for any war, without discrimination of the cause; so I affirm, that there is no mode or profession of life more villainous, than that of those individuals who go to war, hired and paid so much per man, without the least regard to the justice or injustice of the cause; but determining that to be the most righteous war where there is the best pay.

This is the very reproach which is thrown in the teeth of the Ætolians by Philip, as we read in Livy; and of the Arcadians by Dionysius, the Milesian, in these words: "The Arcadians, says he, have set up a fair or market for war, a man-carcase shop; and thus the misfortunes of Greece at large, turn to the profit of the Arcadians in particular, while war and its calamities are diffused all over Greece, without any just cause."

"It is a lamentable thing, as Antiphanes the poet says, "that for the sake of getting his living, a man should expose himself to death, in the way of trade or occupation." Dio Prusæensis also says, "what is more necessary to us than life, or what do all men value at a higher rate; yet even this, men will throw away through their desire after money!"

"It is but a trifling matter that such wretches sell their own death for money, if they did not by the very act, and at the same time, sell the death of innocent men; and they are the more detestable than the common hangman, in proportion, as it is worse to kill a man without any reason at all, than to execute a condemned malefactor. Thus Antisthenes has said, that common executioners are more respectable characters than despots, inasmuch as executioners put the guilty to death, while despots shed innocent blood."